

**Testimony of MARGARET CREETH  
Programs Manager, Wilton Youth Services  
Board Member, Wilton Youth Services**

**H.B. No. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM  
ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.**

*February 23, 2017 Appropriations Subcommittee on Health Public Hearing*

*Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services*

*Regional Action Council and Regional Mental Health Board Funding*

Dear: Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, Senator Markley, Representative Dillon and members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Margaret Creeth, and I am a resident of Wilton, CT. I serve on the board of Wilton Youth Council, our Local Prevention Council, and am the Programs Manager for Wilton Youth Services, a division of the Social Services Department for the town of Wilton. I write to you today to strongly oppose the consolidations of the Regional Action Councils and Regional Mental Health Boards. With the mental health system in Connecticut already shrinking, cutting these effective prevention agencies would be detrimental to Connecticut residents.

Wilton Youth Services is supported by the Mid-Fairfield Substance Abuse Coalition (MFSAC), a program of the Human Services Council, which is the Regional Action Council (RAC) for our area. Their support comes in many forms including a grant to provide funding for a program for Wilton teenagers which encourages a substance free, healthy life-style and leadership training. Our Regional Action Council also acts as a focal point for coordination of regional substance abuse prevention initiatives and facilitates the interaction of diverse groups within its catchment area to share limited resources. The work of our RAC is therefore important in reducing costs associated with substance abuse prevention activities. With opioid use rising dramatically in our state, there is a critical need for the leadership and coordination activities provided by our RAC.

An investment in our RAC is an investment in our young people and therefore in the future of our state. Please continue to support the important work of our Regional Action Councils.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony and for your work on behalf of the communities in our state.

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